



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the purpose of the ThreeStar program?

ThreeStar MORE incentivizes cities and counties to evaluate and take action to improve their community within Governor Haslam's five priority areas: Jobs and Economic Development; Fiscal Strength and Efficient Government; Public Safety; Education and Workforce Development; and Health and Welfare.

2. Why has the ThreeStar program changed from past years?

The program has been redesigned to address Governor Haslam's priorities while eliminating the complications, confusion, time commitment and excessive paper work experienced in past years as identified by stakeholder interviews and meetings from each region of the state. The program also recognizes ECD resources existing in the new structure priorities of the department.

3. Who can participate in the ThreeStar program?

All counties may participate in the program through their county joint economic and community development board. Metropolitan county governments may participate through the county mayor's office.

4. What are the incentives for participating in ThreeStar?

As long as a county files a completed Activity Plan annually, incentive match dollars continue to be available to all counties through the Fast Track Infrastructure and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs administered by ECD.

Counties that have an economic classification of Tier 2 or Tier 3 by ECD on July 1 of each year are eligible to apply for a reimbursable grant to initiate and implement activities that promote improvement in one or more of the Governor's five priority areas.

5. What about the cities and incentives?

When a county becomes ThreeStar eligible, that county and all its cities are eligible for Fast Track Infrastructure and CDBG incentives. In Tier 2 and 3 communities, cities must work with the county through the Joint Economic and Community Development Board and other stakeholders to develop the proposed use for their grant dollars.

6. How will the program be measured?

ThreeStar expects each participating county to make progress in one or more of the Governor's five priorities - Jobs and Economic Development; Fiscal Strength and Efficient Government; Public Safety; Education and Workforce Development; and Health and Welfare. ECD will provide a score card annually that explains the requirements.



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Example:

Activity Based Areas

Jobs and Economic Development

- The county has participated in at least two (2) ECD sponsored activities/programs
- The county joint economic and community development board meets the requirements of Tennessee statutes

Fiscal Strength and Efficient Government (Reported by the Comptroller of the Treasury)

- Budget adopted on time per governing statute
- File annual cash flow forecast with Comptroller's office
- File debt management policy with Comptroller's office.
- Create or maintain an Audit Committee

Scored Areas

Public Safety (Reported by the Department of Safety)

- Decrease crime rate per 1,000 inhabitants

Education and Workforce Development (Reported by the Department of Education)

- Increase the percentage of 3rd to 8th grade students scoring proficient or advanced in math

Health and Welfare (Reported by the Department of Health)

- Reduction of BMI scores of 8th graders

7. How are the score cards reviewed?

Each participating county will receive a score card which will indicate its status using the most current data as the baseline for measurement. In December of the current year, the score from the previous year will be reviewed against the current year's score to establish continuing program eligibility.

8. Do we compete with other counties for incentives?

ThreeStar does not cause counties to compete with one another; counties compete only with themselves and sharing best practices across county lines or pooling resources regionally to address challenges is highly encouraged.

9. What are the Activity Plans and Grant Budget?

The activity plan is a one to two page summary that explains how the county (and cities) propose to use incentive dollars to improve in one or more of the five priority areas. For Tier 2 and 3 counties, the plan must be accompanied by a budget detailing what the funds will be used for in specific categories (example: professional services or training).



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10. When must the Activity Plan and Grant Budget be filed with ECD?

The activity plan and grant budget must be filed between January 1 and March 31 and must include the Tier 2 & 3 grant applications.

11. When will the grant be awarded?

The contracting period will generally be between March 1 and June 30 of the current year. Contracts will be processed within 60 days as the activity plans and budgets are filed. The grant contract must be executed before reimbursable work can begin.

12. How long is the grant term?

The grant term will be for nine months of the contract date. No activity conducted before the contract date or the termination date will be reimbursed.

13. What does MORE represent?

Measurable
Outcome Oriented
Reward Results
Efficient

14. How about counties that have multi-schools in their county's systems? Which standard is used?

All schools in the county will be included. There will be one measure for all the schools.

15. Does ThreeStar run on the calendar year?

Yes, the ThreeStar program is scheduled on a calendar year basis and all activities must take place within that year.

16. Can everything be reported digitally?

Yes, all materials will be on the www.tn.gov/ecd website in fillable PDF format. All materials, with the exception of grant contracts, may be emailed directly to ECD.

17. When filling out the grant application, can the budgets be estimates or do they need to be real numbers?

The grant application requires a detailed grant budget.